Agriculture during eleventh five year plan

2508. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are focusing on farming during the Eleventh Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the road map prepared so far;

(c) whether the accelerated growth in agriculture and infrastructural support for non-sector in rural areas would help reverse the emerging rural-urban divide; and

(d) if so, the policy framework of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Around 4% per annum growth rate has been targeted in agriculture in 11th Five-Year Plan which is double of that achieved in 10th five year plan. The 11th plan strategy to raise agricultural output is based on the following elements:—

- Doubling the rate of growth of irrigated area;
- Improving water management, rain water harvesting and watershed development;
- Reclaiming degraded land and focus on soil quality;
- Bridging the knowledge gap through effective extension;
- Diversifying into high value outputs, fruits, vegetables, flowers, herbs and spices, medicinal plants, bamboo, bio-diesel etc., but with adequate measures to ensure food security;
- Promoting animal husbandry and fishery;
- Providing easy access to credit at affordable rates;
- Improving the incentive structure and functioning of markets;
- Refocusing on land reforms issues.

(c) and (d) With a view to reduce the emerging rural-urban divide, apart from accelerating growth in agriculture; infrastructural support has been envisaged for non-farm sector in rural areas for which the Government has initiated programmes such as Bharat Nirman.